



## Insider's Look at Grand Canyon

### Webisode #15 – Interview with Phantom Ranch NPS Volunteer Sjors Transcript

**Ranger Patrick:** Well, Hello. This is Ranger Patrick with another episode of Insider's Look at Grand Canyon. I am down at Phantom Ranch. I am hiking the trail and ahead of me, is long time Volunteer Sjors. And he has agreed to show me some of the waterworks of how Phantom Ranch works. Let's see what he has to say.

**Volunteer Sjors:** So, there is two systems coming through. There is the irrigation on the surface and there is a pipe going underground. This part of it belongs to the ranch. The ranch takes care of this. This is another system that they can get extra water. There is a pump underneath here, they can turn that on and the water comes up and they can pump even more water into the ditch.

**Patrick:** That is a pretty deep hole down there...

O.K., so Phantom Ranch, right now, they are using this to water just to irrigate their trees?

**Sjors:** Yup.

**Patrick:** That's the main thing going on there. So we got a sub-pipe coming out...

**Sjors:** This pipe is the sub-pipe; you could say that feeds around the ranger station and stuff like that, all the trees. So this is our branch.

**Patrick:** Our branch of the same system.

**Sjors:** The same creek water that we got, we have been following the line, so when they have a pipeline break and they (still) need to do cleaning of the shower house or the flushing of the toilets. People can turn this water on, fill up a bucket of creek water and go there, instead of having to go all the way to the creek. It makes life a lot easier during these little crisis's.

**Patrick:** Gotcha...

Well hey; I had a question for you. I noticed around many of the trees, this wire mesh. It is really strong. Could you tell the folks out there why it is so strong, how this came about, what is it doing for us down here and the trees?

**Sjors:** Well, this is to protect the trees, the historic trees. We have beavers here that love to chew them (the historic trees) down. When I first moved here (approximately 20 years ago), we were losing a tree per week. So, I made a recommendation of getting this type of wire to screen all trees. It took three years to screen all the trees that already were here. I planted this (tree) 15 years ago, so all the new trees that are being planted are getting screens.

**Patrick:** So, we are almost down by the campground now and we looking at a tree. How old is this tree Sjors?

**Sjors:** I planted this about ten years ago. It is an Ash tree.

**Patrick:** We are seeing two birds in it. One is red and one is yellow. What is the red one? It just flew to a bigger tree.

**Sjors:** It is a male summer Tanager, which they come here every summer to nest. And the little guy is the yellow Warbler.

**Patrick:** So, all of these trees that are opposite of the campground, right next to the creek here, makes it a nice shady corridor for everybody at the campground and getting into the creek. Not into the river, but actually into Bright Angel Creek to cool off.

**Sjors:** But, the main reason why chose to plant so many trees here is because there is some water over here at a place we call Lapp Lake and over there is the corral. It draws a lot of birds, black birds, and things like this. So this is kind of our little bird sanctuary to Phantom, ha!

...This part was planted about 16 years ago. These whole rows of trees were not here when I first moved down here. In the afternoon the sun is over here.

**Patrick:** So the sun is in the west baking these mules here.

**Sjors:** Yah, so I decided to plant trees here. Now every afternoon they got shade to hang out in.

**Patrick:** So, we are on the bridge to the campground. What can you tell the audience about the trees that line the creek next to the campground? When did those get planted?

**Sjors:** These trees have been here for awhile. They were put in here after the 1966 flood, which came through here and took half the campground with it. They basically had to redo the whole area.

So they started to plant the trees along here.

**Patrick:** They look young, but it is nice shade over the creek.

**Sjors:** The Bright Angel Creek is, you could say, our life at Phantom. Without this I probably would not be here.

**Patrick:** Why do you say that?

**Sjors:** Because, it keeps us cool, gives a place to lay in the water, and get cool again.

**Patrick:** You know Sjors; I have noticed that you have spent an hour and half showing me all around Phantom Ranch. All the amazing trees, the water system, the bubblers, the irrigation canals, and I thought wow; Sjors really wants to share this with the public! And I think you do, but I think there was something more. What were you trying to do as well?

**Sjors:** Well, you know, occasionally I do hike out on my days off. I need somebody to take over.

**Patrick:** So, while giving me this interview you were incognito training me... well good for you Sjors! Ha, ha that's great!

**Sjors:** I hope you were paying attention.

**Patrick:** Ha, ha I hope so too. Well Sjors, I just want to say thanks for joining us on the show and any last words to the folks out there?

**Sjors:** Have a good one and I hope to see you down here sometime.

**Patrick:** Alright, that's Sjors from Phantom Ranch; maybe you might see him when you come on down here. Join us next time on Insider's Look at Grand Canyon.

